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ABSTRACT

A descriptive analysis is presented of four New York area adult programs in English as a second language or English to speakers of other languages. The following characteristics of the programs are identified: student constituencies, program goals and objectives, methods of needs assessment, program design (formats and methods), classroom dynamics and program management. Information was obtained through interviews with program administrators and faculty, informal talks with students, classroom observations, and examination of program literature and course materials. The programs that were evaluated are as follows: the American Language Program at Columbia University, the American Language Institute at New York University, the English Language Center at LaGuardia Community College of the City University of New York, and the Economic Opportunity Center of Westchester under the auspices of Westchester Community College of the State University of New York. All of the programs had been in existence for at least three years, were noncredit, met at least for the equivalent of a college semester, and had sequentially organized series of courses within a prescribed curriculum. The similarities and differences among these programs are analyzed and a summary of tentative findings are presented. (SW)

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FOUR ADULT PROGRAMS IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

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by

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FOUR ADULT PROGRAMS IN ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

by

Alicia P. Savage with Louise Terry

The authors of this paper studied four noncredit ESL programs in the New York City area in the Spring of 1976. The result is a comparative descriptive analysis of the four programs organized around the following components: student constituencies; program goals and objectives; methods of needs assessment; program design: formats and methods; classroom dynamics; and program management. The similarities and differences among these programs are analyzed and a summary of tentative findings concludes this descriptive study.

INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

A survey of the current literature in adult programs in English as a second language reveals little in the way of program analysis nor is there any definitive resource or guideline for ESL program development or evaluation on the postsecondary level. Although Mezirow, Darkenwald and Knox' study (1974) of federally funded basic education programs in the United States included English instruction to speakers of other languages, these references were peripheral to the main thrust of the project which centered on basic literacy.

This paper is a descriptive analysis of four adult programs in English as a second language or English to speakers of other languages in the New York area. These programs are: the American Language Program at Columbia University; the American Language Institute at New York University; the English Language Center at LaGuardia Community College of the City University of New York; and the Economic Opportunity Center (EOC) of Westchester under the auspices of Westchester Community College of the State University of New York. The first two programs are under the aegis of private universities. Both are administratively under the division

serving adult constituencies: at Columbia, the School of General Studies; at New York University, the School of Continuing Education and Extension Services. The latter two programs are under the sponsorship of publicly-supported community colleges. LaGuardia is part of the City University of New York system and the Economic Opportunity Center of Westchester is administered through SUNY. Similarly, both programs are organized within the adult divisions of these institutions: at LaGuardia, under the division of Continuing Education and Extension Services; at the Economic Opportunity Center, under the general auspices of Westchester Community College.

Program selection for this project was based on the following criteria:

a) programs sponsored by postsecondary institutions on a noncredit basis;

b) programs in existence at least three years;

c) programs with definitive starting and ending dates where classes meet at least for the equivalent of a college semester;

d) programs with a sequentially organized series of courses within a prescribed curriculum.

The primary thrust of this analysis is to identify the salient characteristics of these adult programs in English as a second language in terms of the following components: a) student constituencies; b) program goals and objectives; c) methods of needs assessment; d) program design: formats and methods; e) classroom dynamics; and f) program management. In the final section of this paper, a synthesis of the findings and the patterns that emerge are discussed and their possible implications analyzed in terms of English as a second language program development.

The methods used in collecting data for this project consisted of interviews with program administrators and faculty, informal talks with students, and classroom observations of various levels of English instruction, in addition to examinations of program literature and other relevant materials, such as placement tests, course syllabi and lesson plans where these were made available.

STUDENT CONSTITUENCIES

All four programs serve adult students whose ages range from 17 through 55. Students' linguistic backgrounds represent all the countries of the world. There is a preponderance of Spanish speakers (primarily from Latin America), in addition to large numbers from the Orient, Greece and Arab countries. Age homogeneity is more evident in intensive daytime programs where the median age is in the mid-twenties. In contrast, a broader age spectrum is found in non-intensive evening or Saturday programs.

At Columbia, NYU and LaGuardia, students are generally literate in their own languages and are familiar with the Roman alphabet. Many have had prior English instruction in their native countries. There is general agreement that these student populations have the minimum equivalent of nine years of formal schooling. The average student has had the equivalent of an American high school education and a good percentage has had some postsecondary schooling. Columbia and NYU have a proportionally large number of well-educated adults, about a quarter of whom seek further university study. Although LaGuardia has a similar representation of well-educated adults in its intensive daytime program, the majority of its evening student clientele is generally lower-level blue collar workers. In contrast, the educational level of students in the EOC-W program is lower than any of the other three, primarily because of its institutional thrust toward an economically and educationally disadvantaged target population. The median educational level is approximately at the 8th grade. Moreover, these differential institutional foci are vividly reflected by the tuition and fee structures. For instance, Columbia and NYU have nearly comparable tuition, about $1050. (plus cost of books) for a full-time program (20 hours a week at Columbia; 18 hours a week at NYU). LaGuardia's intensive daytime program (DIP) offers 22 contact hours a week for 12 weeks at a more nominal cost of $550. Non-intensive programs at these institutions vary from $450. at NYU to $55.

at LaGuardia, depending on the number of contact hours. EOC at Westchester, which is state-funded, charges no tuition. Both Columbia and NYU's programs are completely self-sustaining and often profitable. LaGuardia's is instructionally self-supporting, but its administration, support services and overhead are assumed by the College through tax-levied funds. These highly differentiated tuition structures, then, appear to reflect to a great degree the economic, social and educational backgrounds of the student constituencies of these programs.

PROGRAM GOALS

Despite differences in the socio-economic and educational backgrounds of student constituencies in these programs, the primary goal of all four is to enable foreign-born adults to participate freely and comfortably in whatever aspect of American society they choose without the handicap of a language barrier. Concomitant with the goal of language competency is the goal of orientation for better adjustment to the new cultural milieu. These goal alternatives range from basic literacy and functional English for entry into the job market at the EOC-Westchester program to academic language proficiency at the other three institutions.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Four basic learning objectives comprise each level of instruction in all the ESL programs studied. These are listening, speaking, reading and writing skills. Interwoven within these fundamental learning objectives is a general orientation to American society and culture. Depending on the skill competency level, this cultural familiarization is similarly sequenced from the more immediate needs of adjustment to more specific situational contexts, whether for higher academic study or for vocationally-related activities. All four programs delineate specific objectives for each level of instruction, from

beginners with no knowledge of English through the equivalent of Freshman English. In addition, specialized courses for advanced students at NYU and Columbia, for example, focus on particularized needs, either through intensive preparation for university study, or accent correction for businessmen and foreign diplomats.

Within the general organization of beginning, intermediate and advanced levels, all the programs make further differentiations in grouping abilities. NYU, for instance, has nine levels of instruction, comprised of three distinct groupings within each general category. Columbia has eight, based on almost similar criteria; EOC-W has six; and LaGuardia has only four. Additionally, objectives for each level are carefully synchronized with skills assessments held during the registration period (see below). These methods of assessment vary in sophistication and refinement, such as those at Columbia and NYU, to the experimental procedures used at LaGuardia and EOC-W.

METHODS OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Since Columbia and NYU have long-established programs (both are over twenty years old) and have consistently drawn students from all over the world as well as non-English speaking newcomers and residents, there has been no institutional procedure for a broad, community-based model of needs assessment. Moreover, because of its strategic location as the largest urban center on the eastern seaboard, the New York metropolitan area has traditionally been a mecca for foreign-born populations, whether foreign students, newly-arrived immigrants or long-time residents. For this reason, along with supportive information from census tracts and foreign students taking TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) overseas prior to enrolling in colleges and universities in the United States, neither Columbia nor NYU sees a necessity for a more formal general needs assessment.

LaGuardia, on the other hand, established its program in 1971 in response to an existing need for comprehensive ESL instruction at nominal costs, or at

least at half of what these courses cost at private institutions or at various proprietary schools in the metropolitan area. A similar intensive and non-intensive ESL program offered at Queens College (a public institution) has long been oversubscribed, as have been the non-intensive programs at Hunter* and Brooklyn Colleges, as well as the proliferation of ESL course offerings at various community colleges within the CUNY system.

The EOC-W program, however, was developed after a comprehensive survey had been made in the area to determine community needs. Westchester County has been traditionally a prosperous suburb of New York City. The last fifteen years have brought about some demographic changes and in certain sections of the county (primarily New Rochelle, Yonkers and White Plains), there has been a large growth in the number of economically and educationally disadvantaged populations. The methods employed by EOC-W to assess educational needs involves a systematic collection of information from community agencies such as the Office of Manpower Development, the State Employment local office and the Westchester County Executive Office, in addition to special agencies, such as the Puerto Rican and Cuban Councils.

Procedures for identifying more specific student language needs are used by all four programs by means of oral and written tests as well as personal interviews. Both Columbia and NYU have designed their own testing and interview procedures based on national standards set by the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). Through the years these institutions have continually refined their tests as effective instruments for proper level assignment of students. These placement measurements encompass grammar, reading and listening comprehension, vocabulary, writing and oral skills. LaGuardia, on the other hand, uses the commercially-prepared Davis Diagnostic Test for Students of English as a Seocnd Language (McGraw-Hill), in addition to in-house developed tests which are continuously being revised and refined. Not only are these tests used for level assignment, but also for measuring achievement at the end of the term.

*Hunter College's Center for Lifelong Learning now offers intensive ESL programs at about the same cost as LaGuardia's.

At EOC-W the procedure is to first measure literacy in the students' own languages, which are generally Spanish or Arabic. If students have any knowledge of English, theyare given the California Test in English for appropriate ESL placement in six levels of proficiency. A corollary placement tool in all these programs is an oral interview that involves a set of questions eliciting name, address, country of origin, years of schooling, etc., and gradually becoming more complex in structure and sometimes involving task directions. Additionally, this interview process is used for assessing student aspirations and interests. In any event, none of the programs assign courses to students solely on the basis of test scores.

PROGRAM DESIGN: FORMATS AND METHODS

The basic design of all four programs is small group instruction although NYU's American Language Institute offers individual private instruction as well. NYU and Columbia, because of their long experience in this field, have established a curriculum of differentiated levels of instruction with specific course objectives for each. The syllabus for each level is comprehensively designed so that higher levels of achievement is sequentially based on previously learned material. Such design incorporates existing theories and principles in second language learning and allows for the variation in hours of instruction that differentiate intensive from non-intensive instruction. Although the long-established programs have given a great deal of refinement in their curriculum planning, flexibility is given to individual instructors for the selection and organization of learning activities that are most appropriate to student needs at whatever level he has has been placed. As mentioned previously, placement testing is carefully synchronized with the language objectives set forth for each level of instruction. Both Columbia and NYU have a chart of English proficiency levels, based on national TOEFL standards, which serve as a guide for language needs assessment, ranging from nil proficiency through full academic

proficiency. The flexibility built into the curriculum design is the discretion it gives to each instructor in determining learning priorities that meet student needs within the overall syllabic framework.

LaGuardia is in the process of refining standardized level objectives. A current project funded by the Chancellor's (CUNY) Grant Fund for Curricular Diversity, is working on course syllabi covering each of the four basic skills in sequentially integrated levels of proficiency. Similarly, EOC-W, through its division of Program Development and Research, is continually reassessing its curriculum design and refining the syllabus for each level to better reflect student needs.

The emphasis in all beginning levels is on functional oral and aural skills, the most basic objective of which is for the student to comprehend the classroom mode of communication since English is the only medium of instruction in all four programs. In this level special attention is given to intonation, stress and rhythm, simple statements and question forms of the present tense including the present continuous, commands, Wh and yes/no questions, and word order. Increase in complexity within and between each level of instruction is sequentially built upon previously learned material. The level of proficiency towards which the student strives for depends upon his level placement at point of entry and the number of contact hours he registers for. Constant reassessment is made by each instructor to ascertain correct level placement and provisions are made for movement into higher levels when indicated during the term.

The learning objectives for each level take into account cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects of language and cultural acquisition by means of varied teacher-selected activities in the four basic skills. In all four programs a list of textbooks is recommended for each level; however, in no program is the curriculum textbook based. Final choice of text is left to the instructor who is also responsible for selecting supplementary materials--realia, cuisinaire rods, hand-outs, a-v software and hardware. Content is also

determined by the instructor in response to and in consideration of relevancy to students' interests and experiences. In all four programs cultural orientation is continuously emphasized and interwoven into all activities.

Language laboratory, once a prerequisite component of language programs, no longer enjoys such priority except at Columbia where one hour of lab work is recommended for every four hours of classroom instruction. NYU and LaGuardia have instituted alternatives which take into account individual student interests. LaGuardia, for instance, has set aside one day for its intensive daytime students to participate in open workshops and onsite cultural activities at museums, concerts and the like. One group has elected to put together a student newspaper. At NYU activities are planned at the new Bobst library where tapes, records and films are listened to or viewed at the students' option. At EOC-W there is a "media" library which contains tapes, records and films, open to the students free of charge.

No standardized methododology is prescribed by any of the programs. Rather, an eclectic approach is encouraged, dependent only on the teacher's decision on how best to approach a particular activity.

CLASSROOM DYNAMICS

As previously stated, no particular teaching method is administratively endorsed. At NYU and LaGuardia there is wide application of diverse approaches. In the classes observed, however, there was a consistent emphasis on peer-mediation techniques, whether in dyads, triads or within the entire group. Gattegno's Silent Way, which is essentially a student-centered problem-solving strategy, is employed predominantly by the younger teachers. During classroom observations, teachers used a variety of techniques, appropriate to the particular activity, during each two or three-hour session. Activities were generally well-paced and varied; none was ever prolonged to the point of saturation or boredom. In beginning classes, aural-oral skills were given high priority. Teacher modeling

and correction were kept to a bare minimum. Rather, peer-mediation was frequently employed for modeling and correction, particularly in the more advanced classes. In all class observations, teacher-prepared materials, realia, pictures, cuisinaire rods, and other visual aids were widely utilized; textbooks were rarely used except for homework assignments. Writing tasks, except in advanced levels, were usually given as homework. These were promptly returned and reviewed either orally or written on the blackboard by students and subsequently critiqued by the group. Self-directed problem solving was widely encouraged, although some teachers engaged in brief teacher-centered activities which generally lent themselves to such an approach, as, for instance, in written dictation, or in clarifying a grammatical rule in one of the more advanced classes. Throughout all class activities, cultural references were made as they arose within a situation either spontaneously as in a student-directed inquiry about a slang expression, or parenthetically by the instructor giving examples of alternative idiomatic expressions one generally encounters in the social milieu, or explaining the difference between formal and informal styles of spoken language.

In all cases teachers maintained an easy, but purposeful, informality. There was evident high regard for student self esteem. The wide use of peer-mediation at NYU and LaGuardia appeared to have very definite positive effects as each student betrayed little self-consciousness despite the wide range of linguistic backgrounds represented in class. Most of the students readily participated in peer-mediation or in any of the class activities in progress. This eagerness to participate and this apparent lack of self-consciousness were evident in both day and evening classes in all four programs. Classes were generally small, about 11 or 12 in beginning levels and no more than 15 to 17 in more advanced levels. 15 is considered maximum in beginning classes and 17 or 18 is the limit in more advanced groups.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

In all four programs, the model of evaluation for each instructional level is goal focussed and more specifically, on course level objectives. Regular informal testing on all four aspects of the language is done at each level. At LaGuardia, the Davis test is additionally administered at the end of each term to assess achievement on a standardized measure. NYU and Columbia have in-house tests to determine sufficient competence in a particular level of study and, like LaGuardia, the results determine the student's progression into the next level of instruction. For those who go on to university study, the TOEFL test is also taken by students. Additionally, registration figures, the number of reregistrants, accuracy of level placement are other foci of evaluation. At EOC-W, the method of evaluation consists of teacher-made tests to determine course achievement and readiness to enter the next level of study in ESL or in job training segments of the overall program. Meticulous records are also kept of the number of students who enter other EOC-W programs after completing the ESL segment and these are included in the program evaluation design.

All the programs in this study, except EOC-W, do not have a systematic procedure of following-up on whether students have found suitable employment based on language proficiency, adequate adjustment to the new cultural milieu, or what percentage of these populations have gone on to university study in this country. However, both administrators and faculty are involved in assessment and evaluation of overall program goals, course objectives, curriculum design, syllabus content, testing for achievement and placement, review of textbooks and supplementary aids, teaching approaches as well as teacher effectiveness. At these three institutions, for example, there is continuous refinement in methods of placement testing--both written and oral as well as the personal interview--to avoid inappropriate level assignment even though reassessment is continued by the class instructor and provisions made for interclass transfer

early in the term for those few who have been inappropriately assigned. Another mode of evaluation is in the form of regularly-instituted teacher observations. At LaGuardia, the faculty union agreement mandates teacher observation at least once a term for adjunct faculty. Its system of level coordinators, similar to NYU's and Columbia's, affords more frequent opportunities for peer observations. At both NYU and Columbia, peer observations are the responsibility of program coordinators who also conduct in-service training periodically, or as the need arises in individual cases. AT EOC-W, the teachers are observed three times a year by the Curriculum Coordinator, and weekly lesson plans are submitted and evaluated by SUNY (State University of New York) staff once a year.

In addition to peer observations, LaGuardia conducts student evaluations of teachers each semester and includes a questionnaire eliciting student views about course objectives, teaching approaches and content. Both NYU and Columbia elicit student input periodically, but more regularly through the forum of readily accessible administrators and the availability of the foreign student advisor at NYU.

Student attrition in a class, though rare, is another source of further inquiry and assessment, whether for reasons of inappropriate content and design or teacher ineffectiveness. Moreover, at both NYU and Columbia, classes are used as laboratories for training students in their TESOL teacher training graduate programs. Consequently, there is continuous discussion and evaluation of teaching strategies among administrators, student-teachers and faculty.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The ESL programs studied in this project are varied in size. NYU has the largest enrollment of about 900 to 1000 a term (including special contract projects such as the contingent of Russian-Jewish emigrees (at the time of this study) which called for special planning and design to meet specific ESL needs

for job training). LaGuardia has approximately 500 of which about 65 are in the intensive daytime program. Columbia has a student population of about 300 to 400 each semester while EOC-W has a total enrollment of 100 students in ESL. All four programs are headed by a full-time director although at EOC-W, the ESL unit is but one of several that includes high school equivalency preparation, developmental skills, college entry preparation and vocational training. At NYU the current director of the American Language Institute has full professorial rank; his vice director is an associate professor. In addition to a full-time foreign student advisor, there are 20 full-time faculty ranging in rank from associate professor to instructor. All have masters in TESOL, EFL, or linguistics. One has a doctorate. Similar criteria are used in the recruitment and selection of the forty adjuncts on the staff. Some adjuncts teach twelve hours a week, so essentially their commitment to the program is virtually full-time.

There are five programs at the NYU American Language Institute: the Daytime Intensive (18 hours per week), comprised mostly of international students of whom 25 to 30 per cent plan further university study; the Daytime Comprehensive (9 hours a week), composed of night shift workers and housewives; the Evening Comprehensive (6 hours a week), predominantly high-level blue collar and low-level white collar workers, some businessmen, and 60 per cent of whom are Spanish speakers; and finally, the Saturday School (5 hours a week), with substantially the same population as the evening school. Each program is supervised by a coordinator who is selected from among the full-time faculty. Each coordinator also takes on a partial teaching load and is responsible for keeping each program "academically together," in the words of the director. The coordinator maintains direct and regular contact with teachers in his program; consults with them on program design, format, evaluation, text selection; apprises them of new developments in teaching approaches, curriculum materials; observes and evaluates them and conducts in-service training as needed. All coordinators and the rest of the full-time faculty take part in placement assessment

and program evaluation three times a year.

Similarly, at Columbia a full-time director with faculty rank administers the American Language Program and reports directly to the Dean of the School of General Studies. There are thirteen full-time and twenty-one part-time faculty members, all with at least a masters degree in TESOL or in a related field. In addition to teaching, full-time faculty are deployed either in program development, in coordination of daytime or evening classes, or in serving as "master" teachers for newer faculty members.

LaGuardia's English Language Center is headed by a full-time, faculty-rank director, who reports to the Dean of the Division of Continuing Education and Extension Services (the noncredit branch of the College). Until recent budget retrenchments, two faculty-rank assistant directors were assigned to the program. One line was recently abolished and the other is on temporary loan to another unit of the institution. Classes are staffed entirely by adjunct faculty, all of whom have masters in TESOL or related fields, such as linguistics or foreign language teaching. Nine teachers are assigned to the intensive daytime program (DIP) and nineteen to the non-intensive evening and Saturday programs (ENIP and SNIP). A number of faculty in DIP have nearly the equivalent of full-time loads of eleven contact hours a week.

Stress is given to inter-faculty communication and planning. This is implemented by the assignment of coordinators for each of the four levels of instruction. Each coordinator is given responsibility and extra compensation for holding weekly meetings for the purpose of coordinating team teaching in the DIP program as well as exchanging ideas and materials, reassessing program design, course objectives and evaluation of class progress. While faculty in the non-intensive programs do not meet formally as often as the intensive day program, the director or assistant director provides ready accessibility for informal discussion on whatever matters concern faculty members. A comprehensive library of ESL resources is also available at any time to all staff members, in

addition to a file of lesson plans submitted weekly by each teacher. The latter resource is regularly assessed by level coordinators and kept as a permanent record of the entire semester's learning activities. Formal class observations by administrators or level coordinators are held at least once a term for non-intensive program faculty and more often for intensive-program teachers. As prescribed by the union agreement (the Professional Staff Congress representing all CUNY full-time and part-time faculty), a written report is subsequently discussed with the observed teacher and becomes a permanent record in that instructor's personnel file.

The administrative structure of EOC-W includes a full-time director and four coordinators in charge of the following respective services: curriculum, student personnel services, business and finance, and program development and research. There are six ESL faculty who teach part-time; all have masters in TESOL or in related fields. Teachers are observed three times a year by the Curriculum Coordinator. As there is no ESL coordinator or supervisor, teachers write their own course syllabus. They submit weekly lesson plans which are inspected by representatives of SUNY once a year.

Methods of student recruitment vary from one program to another. Columbia and NYU receive inquiries from all over the world from prospective students desiring entrance into their undergraduate and graduate programs, or from foreign businessmen, dignitaries and diplomats. For local populations, both programs send out large mailings of brochures and flyers and advertise in all media including the foreign newspapers, radio, etc. "Word of mouth" through current and former students is also given a great deal of credit by administrators of both programs. LaGuardia, on the other hand, has a limited publicity budget, but does engage in extensive mailings and occasional media advertising. It, too, claims successful recruitment through the "word of mouth" route. EOC-W utilizes the mass media--radio, TV and newspapers, in addition to sending out speakers and brochures to appropriate agencies in the community.

It also holds "open house" once a year as a means of familiarizing the community with its program goals and objectives.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Student Constituencies and Student Motivation

A significant similarity among student constituencies is the homogeneous age grouping among those in intensive daytime programs at NYU, Columbia and LaGuardia. They are generally in their mid-twenties, have at least the equivalent of a high school education in their own countries and in many cases, some postsecondary schooling. About 25% have some college or are college graduates. The majority are unemployed although some few have part-time occupations. About half are on student visas and have intentions of pursuing further study as soon as their language skills are adequately proficient. Conversely, students enrolled in non-intensive evening and Saturday programs represent a wider age spectrum with the majority in their late twenties or early thirties. Most are employed during the day and are generally permanent residents of the United States. Whether their goal is higher academic study or vocational mobility, or simply acculturation to the new social milieu, all of these students appear to be highly motivated. As administrators and faculty in these programs have observed, "They want their money's worth. We have no problem with attendance and motivation." NYU and Columbia make no bones about their high tuition. Their programs project a worldwide image of quality and professionalism as well as economic elitism. LaGuardia, though a relatively new and not widely-known program, is slowly building a reputation of quality and professionalism, both in the leadership inspired by the director in continually reassessing program design, curriculum and teaching approaches, but also in the faculty's participation in research, presenting papers at professional TESOL conventions, involvement in local and national professional organizations,

despite the fact that all but the administrators are adjunct faculty. Moreover, LaGuardia's institutional thrust is more egalitarian as this is reflected by its tuition and fee structure and in consonance with the goals of its community college home base. There is no financial aid for ESL students at any of these institutions except for the fortunate few on scholarships from their own countries or those employed by American or foreign companies who have tuition reimbursement plans.

In contrast, students at EOC-W are drawn from the economically and educationally disadvantaged strata of the Westchester County community, and by implication, are probably also socially disadvantaged both here and in their countries of origin. Most of them are underemployed in menial-type jobs not only because of their insufficient English proficiency but also because of their lack of technical skills. Because of the program's funding by state monies through the State University system, there is an obvious concern about attendance and bolstering student motivation. However, administrators report emphatically that ESL students are highly motivated and highly desirous of bettering their situations. Like the other three programs where tuition is charged, the attrition rate at EOC-W, despite the socio-economic status of its target population, is practically nil except for the most extenuating circumstances.

In this analysis of student constituencies and student motivation, the following patterns are signficantly discernible:

a) There is greater age homogeneity in intensive daytime programs. In contrast to part-time programs, students are generally younger and better educated.

b) Student motivation is consistently high in all the programs, whether in costly private institutions, or in nominally priced or free programs in the public sector.

c) Attrition is practically nil in all the programs.

Program Goals and Objectives

There is no fundamental difference among the articulated goals of all these ESL programs. All seek to enable foreign-born adults to attain sufficient language competence to enable them to function freely and comfortably in the American milieu, whether these alternatives are social, vocational mobility, or pursuit of higher academic study. Moreover, there is a pattern of similarity in the setting of course objectives based on specific needs assessments derived from oral and written tests in all four skills areas of language and from interviews eliciting student experience and background as well as interests and aspirations. There is general concurrence in all the programs that level placement is not based solely on testing, but rather on more wholistic assessment of student needs. Moreover, all four programs strongly emphasize the goal of increasing the students' awareness of cultural differences as important corollaries to the acquisition of language skills. As one faculty member at NYU said: "There is no such thing as setting aside 15% of class time to the teaching of culture. Cultural orientation is interwoven into all learning activities. Our aim is to make them as comfortable as possible in the new social setting at whatever skills level they're at."

In summary, program goals and objectives are reflective of student language needs and interests to enable them to function and communicate in the new linguistic and social setting and to pursue individual goals, whether these are social adaptation, vocational mobility, or higher academic study.

Methods of Needs Assessment

The long-established programs at Columbia and NYU have consistently refined their own methods of skills assessment based on national standards set by the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), administered by the Educational Testing Center, Princeton, New Jersey. LaGuardia and EOC-W use

commercially prepared tests--Davis Diagnostic Test for Students of ESL (McGraw-Hill), and the California Test in English--which are also employed to measure achievement in each level of instruction (in addition to in-house developed or teacher-made tests). The different emphases of these programs determine to a great extent the kinds of skills assessment tools that are appropriate for specific program objectives. Both Columbia and NYU have a proportionately large number of full-time foreign students in their intensive programs whose goals are university-level studies. These students must be able to achieve satisfactory scores in TOEFL for acceptance into any degree work. In contrast, the institutional thrust at LaGuardia and EOC-W is primarily directed at more immediate goals of language proficiency to enable students to function in everyday activities and to obtain sufficient linguistic fluency for vocational training or job mobility. Although both NYU and Columbia have similar goals and objectives in their part-time, non-intensive programs, their assessment tools must necessarily be more comprehensive and encompass a wider range of graduated levels of complexity through university-level proficiency. If LaGuardia enlarges its intensive program (present enrollment--65) and continues to attract university-bound foreign students, it will have to modify its needs assessment procedures to conform to TOEFL standards.

Except for EOC-W, none of the programs has any procedure for assessing community needs. They seem to rely on census tracts, foreign student applications, and the fact that the New York metropolitan area has traditionally been a mecca for the foreign-born. Additionally, the huge influx of UN and diplomatic personnel as well as the large numbers of foreign business concerns based in the New York area further provides a ready market of highly-motivated and economically mobile student populations for these programs.

Program Designs: Formats and Methods

One design commonality in all four programs is that of small group

instruction based on reasonably homogeneous language skills levels and student interests and goals where these are feasible. In all programs, moreover, instruction is conducted exclusively in English. The long-established programs, Columbia and NYU, have highly developed skills assessment tools synchronized with curricular designs, encompassing sequentially integrated, higher levels of language complexity. Course syllabi are clearly delineated although individual instructors are given wide latitude in designing learning activities and in setting priorities based on student needs within a particular level. LaGuardia is similarly experimenting and developing a more comprehensive curriculum that would be adaptable for both intensive and non-intensive instruction. EOC-W, on the other hand, depends on individual teachers for sullabus content that reflects student language needs (after testing) within six graduated levels of instruction prior to entry into other segments of the overall program which includes high school equivalency preparation, college entry skills and/or job training. While there is an administratively prescribed level of proficiency required for entrance into the other programs, the instructor is given wide discretion in deciding ESL content within each level of instruction.

Another commonality is that in no program is the curriculum textbook based, although administrators and staff in the three largest programs have jointly selected textbooks for use in each course level and in more specialized areas of ESL study. A third commonality is discernible in the eclectic approaches encouraged by these programs. Teachers are free to use whatever teaching method deemed appropriate, but there seems to be an institutional thrust toward a wholistic approach that stresses cultural orientation and awareness. The larger programs further encourage experimentation in new teaching approaches that are appropriate to adult learners. At NYU and Columbia where TESOL teacher training is offered in their graduate divisions, there seems to be optimal and

up-to-date communication and application of new ideas. Similarly, at LaGuardia where the faculty are TESOL-trained at NYU, Columiba, or at major TESOL or linguistic programs throughout the country, there appears to be a spirit of mutual sharing of teaching ideas and materials. In all these programs, faculty are generally young and specially selected because of prior experience or training in working with adult ESL students.

Classroom Dynamics

Peer-mediation and Gattegno's Silent Way are two approaches widely used in the three large programs--Columbia, NYU and LaGuardia. Classes observed were characterized by well-paced, varied activities in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Often the teacher served as a resource person when the class was divided into dyads or triads. There was little teacher-centered modeling and choral repetition that is generally characteristic of traditional language classes. Rather, students modeled and made corrections themselves. Classes were generally informal with students sitting in circles facing each other. There was easy rapport with the instructor in nearly all of the classes observed. Also consistent and prominent was the wide use of visual aids--realia, pictures, cuisinaire rods. In some classes, tape recorders were used.

At EOC-W, the teaching approaches varied to a degree, but there was less employment of peer-mediation or Gattegno's Silent Way. In contrast to the other three programs, there was greater evidence of teacher-directed learning in this setting.

Program Evaluation

Except for EOC-W, the methods of program evaluation used by the three large ESL programs are exclusively internal. Administrators report that the results of these assessments which go on continuously and are derived primarily

from registration figures, attrition rates, accuracy of level placement, achievement scores in each course level, teacher observations and evaluations, faculty and student input (mostly informal), are put to use in further refinement of program and curricular design, development of new courses, revision of placement tools, planning of inservice training, review of textbooks and other aids, and, in general, improvement of their programs. There is no systematic procedure for following-up on the activities of former student constituencies. There is general consensus that the majority of ESL students in these programs are highly mobile. They change addresses frequently. Each program, however, keeps statistics on how many students pre-register for each succeeding term although these figures are used principally for planning the number of sections in each course level.

Program evaluation at EOC-W is more systematic in terms of how many of their ESL students go on to other segments of the total program outside of the ESL component. External evaluation is also done by project administrators based in SUNY-Albany, but how the results of these evaluations are concretely applied in the ESL program segment is not explicitly stated. The fact that there is no ESL specialist in the local program other than a curriculum coordinator for the total project suggests a peripheral focus on the ESL program itself. That ESL lesson plans are examined and reviewed in Albany once a year additionally implies a kind of remote assessment that does not lend itself to immediate feedback and, consequently, immediate restructuring of program goals, objectives, design, methodology, etc., where these are indicated.

Program Management

Where ESL is the single program focus under a full-time faculty-rank administrator and supported by a staff of full-time faculty, there appears to be a discernible professionalism and a visible pride in the program among faculty and administrators. Both NYU and Columbia also have the advantage of

many years' experience; but in both programs there is this emphasis on continuous refinement based not only on changing student needs, but also on keeping abreast of new developments in second language teaching and learning theories and practice.

Although LaGuardia, which is a relatively new program in comparison to the other two, does not presently have a full-time staff of intructors, it was given full institutional support at its inception in 1971 when three full-time administrator-instructional staff members were assigned to the English Language Center to develop and design ESL programs. Because of budget retrenchments, only the director remains on a full-time line while teaching is done entirely by adjunct staff. This factor has not affected the program to date primarily because some key adjuncts have been assigned nearly full-time loads in addition to responsibilities for coordinating the different levels of instruction for extra compensation. Whether it is the challenge of forging new directions in the ESL field or the charismatic leadership of the director that is the motivating factor for the spirit of professionalism evident at LaGuardia is difficult to say. It may be both.

Another significant pattern that emerges among these three programs is the system of assigning coordinators for each level of instruction or for each subprogram within the total framework, i.e., intensive vs. non-intensive, etc. As NYU's director stated, coordinators keep the programs "academically together." Not only do they oversee their assigned areas of responsibility--curriculum, placement, instruction, evaluation, etc., they also synchronize their work closely with coordinators of other levels or subprograms in order to maintain integration of the hierachically sequenced levels of instruction and to facilitate exchange of new ideas in teaching, program development, curriculum modification, text selection, placement and achievement testing and whatever else arises within their areas of responsibility that could affect the entire program. Columbia has an added feature of assigning "master"

teachers to give guidance to neophytes.

In sharp contrast is the EOC-W program where ESL is but one of several areas of focus. Although there is a full-time director, his attention must necessarily be given to the total program. The absence of an ESL specialist on the staff further limits the scope of administrative leadership in terms of experimentation in new curricular design or teaching approaches. The fact that individual instructors are given wide latitude in determining ESL content that meets adult student needs is commendable, but there still remains a need for coordination in order to maintain curriculum integration. The fact that teachers are part-time also poses another problem in terms of keeping the program "academically together."

The extent to which teachers are involved in assessing student skills for level placement and in determining criteria for each level of instruction and the specific objectives set for each are crucial elements that demand some kind of coordination and establishment of some regular channels of communication among faculty. While these areas of faculty involvement were not clearly delineated, the fact that the ESL component is small and enrolls only an average of 100 students per term suggests that fluidity in intra-faculty communications is probably maintained in such a setting.

A SUMMARY OF TENTATIVE FINDINGS

While this study does not purport to be an in-depth analysis of all the components and the intricate dynamics that constitute an adult ESL program, we tentatively arrive at the following observations with regard to the specific programs under discussion:

1. ESL programs in the private educational sector clearly reflect institutional thrusts toward the better educated as well as the socially and economically mobile foreign-born adult.

2. There is greater age homogeneity in daytime intensive

ESL programs in both the private and public postsecondary institutions. This population is comprised of better educated young adults in their mid-twenties, the majority of whom seek further vocational or higher academic studies.

3. There is greater heterogeneity in age, educational background and socio-economic status in non-intensive, part-time programs in both private and public institutions.

4. Programs that are singularly focussed in ESL appear to give a great deal of attention to ongoing internal assessment of all aspects of programming--skills assessment, setting of goals and objectives, curriculum design, experimentation in methodology, faculty development, testing, and in developing new courses. In all these areas faculty input is optimal. Student involvement is still peripheral although their input is solicited through end-of-the term course and teacher evaluations.

5. Student motivation is consistently high in all these programs; attrition is practically nil.

6. In all the programs great importance is given to synchronization of skills assessment at point of entry with proper placement in a hierarchy of sequentially integrated levels of instruction within the total curriculum. This framework is institutionally determined in terms of program goals and objectives.

7. There is no prescribed ESL methodology; rather there is encouragement of eclecticism and experimentation with new approaches that are appropriate for adult learners. In all the programs there appears to be an institutional emphasis on wholistic approaches that interweave cultural orientation with all aspects of language learning. Further, the large programs appear to be veering away from traditional teacher-centered strategies as greater numbers of their faculty have professional training in TESOL, linguistics or related areas of specialization. Moreover, the emphasis on inservice training

and faculty development appears to be in the direction of student-centered approaches including peer mediation and individuation. There is consistently wide use of teacher-prepared materials that lend themselves to greater individuation and the meeting of more specific student needs.

8. None of the curriculum is textbook based although administrators and faculty have jointly selected textbook recommendations for each level of instruction.

9. Ongoing internal evaluation, primarily through the network of level and program coordinators, registration figures, attrition rates, placement and achievement testing, classroom observations, student evaluation of courses and faculty, is the mode consistently used by all the large programs in this study. This evaluation is considered essential and plays a complementary role in the total program. The state-funded EOC-W program is the only one that utilizes external evaluators and has a mechanism for keeping track of former student constituencies. However, the absence of an ESL specialist on the staff and the exclusive use of part-time faculty suggest a peripheral focus in this area. This appears to be incongruous in view of the fact that ESL is a prerequisite for non-English speakers who seek entry into other components of the EOC-W program..

10. Finally, while Columbia and NYU seem to be highly successful and professional in their ESL programming for the better educated foreign-born adult, both programs, by the very nature of their design, can offer little in the way of developing programs for the less educationally and economically advantaged unless there is some basic restructuring in institutional perspectives. LaGuardia, on the other hand, has attempted to partially close the gap between the two extremes represented by the programs in the private educational sector and that of EOC-W which represents a definitive thrust towards the harder to reach ESL student population. Despite LaGuardia's more egalitarian approach to meeting ESL needs in the New York metropolitan area, it has not

taken on the task of providing basic literacy in ESL. The question also arises whether it is appropriate for postsecondary institutions to go into such type of programming despite an obvious great need for this kind of educational opportunity in the New York area. The 1970 U.S. Census Report indicated that there are about 1,410,363 people in the five boroughs of New York City who were born in non-English speaking countries. In addition there are approximately 1,150,272 persons who claim Spanish as their mother tongue. Even allowing that half of these figures are comprised of children or adults who are already proficient in the English language, it is still a striking fact that there is a tremendous potential ESL student constituency in this area which none of the four programs discussed in this paper has even begun to reach.

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